

how dare you love me like you've never known fear

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how dare you love me like you've never known fear

by Anonymous

Summary

day seven: soulmates AU

George has been alive for sixteen hundred years when he meets (and kills) Dream for the first time. He's been alive for sixteen hundred and fifty when he meets Dream for the second time. It takes a good four hundred years for them to become friends, and then another two thousand more for them to realize they're in love.

Notes

god this monstrosity of a fic took me an entire day to write jesus h. anyways i hope you guys enjoy it!!! dnf week has been so much fun and i'm so thankful i got to be a part of it

title from "home to me" by devil and the deep blue sea

some notes: the mechanics of this world are taken directly from the movie "the old guard" which i HIGHLY recommend. that means that the immortals (which is all the named characters) can die (and do die!), but they just heal up right afterwards.

and as always, don't be creepy about content creators, these are my interpretations of their personas, if they're uncomfortable this will be deleted, etc etc

enjoy!!

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

The first time George sees him, the golden-eyed man has a sword tight in his grip and looks like he wants nothing more than to pummel George into the ground. George, bow in hand, completely ignores him.

They're on opposite sides of a conflict that George can't even remember the name of. All he knows is that he was hired as a mercenary, to help protect this village. They paid him handsomely, and that's all he cares about, really, material gain. There's not much else that matters to man that's been alive for sixteen centuries.

The golden-eyed man attempts to run George through with his sword. George blocks it easily with the arrow he's just drawn from his quiver. The arrow shatters, but that doesn't matter, George is quick to draw another one. He notches it on the string of his bow and pulls back, and lets the arrow fly through his skull, piercing right between those pretty golden eyes.

He doesn't think of the man again.

George has gone by many names, over the years. He was born into a village he can't remember the name of, to parents whose faces he can no longer recall. He has secret caves and bases across three continents, and he speaks eighteen different languages. He's learned more styles of fighting than most men could hope to achieve in a lifetime, because he's had four lifetimes to do it.

He is Error, the man who never seems to die, a legend, a myth. He is Error, who shows up out of the blue to attempt to make the world a better place, and seek out a little something for himself in the process. He's fond of golden statues and antique paintings and especially truffles. He adores truffles.

He has died before. He's been run through with a sword, he's been shot with crossbow bolts and

arrows, he's been poisoned, succumbed to plagues and common influenzas, had his throat slit, fallen from too high, been beheaded, strangled, stabbed, and one highly embarrassing time, choked to death on a bowl of stew. He's died more times than he can count, and every time, he's woken up good as new.

He knows he's not the only immortal like that out there in the world. He knows that Philza the Angel of Death has been alive for nearly a millennium at this point, that Technoblade the Blood God came around about five hundred years ago. But the Angel and the Blood God prefer to conquer, to spread their reign, and George prefers to help rather than harm, so he doesn't associate with other immortals much.

That is, until the golden-eyed man comes along.

The second time George sees him, it's nearly forty years later. George is in the middle of another spat, this time helping a village get rid of the conquerors attempting to overrun their empire, and there he is. George thinks nothing of it for a moment, simply noting that this man is clearly the best on the field (other than himself, of course), and moving on. The man, however, freezes when he sees George.

They meet in the middle of the fight, swords clashing together. George attempts to draw back, to strike again, but the man reaches out and catches his elbow.

"You killed me," he hisses out in the dialect of the empire they're in. His voice is accented and his words are unsteady, but still understandable. George gets it, he doesn't quite have his tongue around the nature of this language yet either.

"I kill a lot of people," he replies, and then he freezes. The words left his mouth before his brain registered that he's seen this man before, that he's *killed* this man before. "Wait."

"You killed me," the golden-eyed man repeats. "And here I am. And here you are."

"We should talk," George says firmly.

His side wins, because the golden-eyed man stops fighting and moves to wait on the side of the battlefield. The villagers thank George and give him his payment- sixty gold coins he'll never use and, at his request, two hearty bowls of mushroom stew. He thanks them and makes his way out to the forest surrounding the small buildings, where the golden-eyed man is waiting.

“So,” he says, still in the dialect from before, since he knows the man can understand it. “What language do you prefer?”

“Greek,” the golden-eyed man replies. “Do you speak it?”

“I speak many languages,” George says, switching tongues easily. The man looks surprised, almost. Greek is George’s first language- or at least, a more ancient dialect of it is- but he’s not going to tell the man that. “You are alive?”

“I thought it was a mistake,” he admits, and George hands him the second bowl of mushroom stew. “Thank you. You had stabbed me, so I had assumed that you missed anything important. At least, until I realized there was no wound of any kind. It was as if nothing had happened. And then I did not age. It’s been forty years. And you have not aged either.”

“No,” George agrees. “That’s how it happened to me, too. I was on the battlefield, I died, and I woke up, not a mark on me. I haven’t aged since then.”

The golden-eyed man nods. “And how many times have you died, since then?”

“Too many to count. You?”

“Twice,” he replies. “What’s your name?”

“Names have power,” George says firmly. It’ll be the first thing he teaches Dream, and certainly not the last. “They have a special kind of power when you’re an immortal. None of us go by our real names.”

“None of *us*,” Dream says. “There are more?”

“Two others that I know of,” George confirms. “They both made the mistake of telling me their names, and now I hold power over them. Do not make the same mistake.”

“Don’t you want to hold power over others?” Dream asks, and George knows this is where they

will differ. Because George does not want to hold power over others, he just wants to hold power over himself. Dream is young, and eager, and he knows that someday, eventually, he will need to pass Dream off to the others, who can teach him things that George cannot.

“No,” George says simply. “That’s not what I do.”

“Alright,” Dream shrugs. “So if you won’t tell me your name, will you tell me what you’re called?”

“I am called Error,” he responds. “You would do well to come up with something similar. Something less real. Leave the past behind. Everyone around you will grow old and die.”

It’s the mindset he’s tried to keep. It’s why he hasn’t formed any relationships other than a tentative alliance with the Blood God and the Angel of Death. The golden-eyed man grimaces, like he has already learned this lesson, and says, “Dream. I’m called Dream.”

“Dream,” George says with a nod. “Welcome to the rest of your life.”

Dream follows him around for approximately a decade. George attempts to teach him everything he can- fighting styles, how to pass as mortal, different languages. Dream, in turn, teaches George things he had long-since forgotten: how to live. George has more fun in those ten years than he can remember in the last sixteen and a half centuries.

The question Dream asks the most often is how old George is. George never tells him. He’s spent the past sixteen-hundred years alone, and he doesn’t need anyone knowing about exactly what he went through.

George does his best to try and open himself up, to be vulnerable around Dream, but it’s difficult. The last person he opened himself up to was Phil, and as soon as Techno came around Phil left with hardly a word. Now they’re against each other more often than they’re with each other, even if they’re careful friends. He tries not to be the same around Dream, and in the end, he doesn’t quite think he succeeds.

They part ways, in the end, just as George predicted. Dream is bloodthirsty, wants to be a conqueror. George introduces him to the Blood God and the Angel of Death, and he goes off with them. George lets him go; he cannot do anything to stop him. It’s better this way, almost- George is still afraid of forming attachments, and Dream is much too volatile, much too *young*.

He doesn't see Dream again for nearly another century. He's helping with the evacuation of a small village that's in the process of being burned down, defending women and children as they run, and he sees Dream in the distance, standing with the conquerors. Leading their charge is the Angel, the Blood God and Dream both standing slightly behind him. George gestures for the men he's fighting alongside to stand down, and watches as the Angel does the same.

"This village is under my protection," he calls in the language he knows is the Angel's first. The Blood God and Dream both look confused, but the Angel shifts slightly. "Leave, Angel. Or should I call you by your real name?"

Because Phil made the mistake of telling George his real name, a long time ago, and to the immortals, only one thing is certain: names hold power. The Angel inclines his head and gestures for his men to leave, and that includes Dream.

"What did you say to him?" one of the villagers asks later, as they're helping put out the fires. "What made him turn and leave so quickly?"

"I told him his name," George replies, and that's the end of that.

The other three follow George around for a while after the incident, or maybe George is the one following them. Either way, he sees Dream a lot, mostly in passing, mostly in fights. Dream's become a much better fighter, better than George could have taught him, anyways. He takes to wearing a white mask that covers the top half of his face, two eyes drilled so George can still see the gold staring at him when they battle.

Dream is an excellent swordsman, but George is sixteen hundred years older. He's forgotten more fighting styles than most men could hope to learn in a lifetime. He has more tricks up his sleeve than leaves on an autumn tree. Dream doesn't defeat him, even if he comes close. George kills him a good many times, and every time he walks away and knows he will see the golden-eyed man again.

George is approaching his two-thousandth birthday the next time he talks to Dream. There is no Angel, no Blood God, just a tavern in the newly-forming Rome that George knows will one day be considered ancient, the two of them staring at each other from across the room. Wordlessly, George nods toward the empty seat next to him.

"How have you been?" he asks in the more modern version of Greek, hoping that Dream still

speaks it. Dream smiles at him.

“Well, thank you,” he says. “And yourself?”

“As good as I can be. What’s the best way you’ve died in the past twenty years?”

It’s how he used to start conversations with the Angel, back before the Blood God came along, when it was just the two of them for nearly five hundred years. They would come across each other and share stories of their travels for a few years before parting ways for another decade or two.

“Disembowelment, definitely,” Dream says. “The Angel took us to Giza and we encountered some mercenaries along the way.”

“Giza,” George says with a nod. He remembers Giza fondly- he was three centuries old at the time, heard about the construction of the Great Pyramids, and made his way down in time to see them being built. He misses Egypt, though he doesn’t miss the heat of the desert- maybe he’ll pay it a visit sometime soon. “Did you see the Sphinx?”

“We did,” Dream confirms. “Beautiful. Have you been?”

George smiles, and Dream gives him a confused look. Realization dawns on him quickly- George is proud, almost, because that’s one of the things he did, teach Dream to read body language.

“Don’t tell me,” he says, and George laughs. “Have you been around since before the pyramids?”

“Maybe,” George says, winking, and Dream scowls. They continue catching up- Dream split off from the others a while ago, hoping to perhaps find George. He’s flattered when he hears this, and invites Dream to stick around Rome for a while with him. “I think something big’s going to happen.”

Something big does happen- he and Dream don’t stay together, necessarily, both going off on their own trips for decades at a time. But they’ve got a shared villa on the coastline that remains undisturbed that they meet at every hundred years or so. They both happen to be in Jerusalem at what becomes the turn of the millennium, watching as a mortal man turns water to wine and performs common miracles.

“Have you seen anything like *that* before?” Dream challenges him, watching from afar as the man christened Jesus walks on water.

“No,” George says with a laugh. “I haven’t.”

They think he’s a new breed of immortal, maybe, but when the Romans catch wind of what he’s doing, he dies all the same.

“They said the tomb was empty,” Dream tells George.

“Of course it was,” George replies. “Why wouldn’t his disciples take the body, let the people who believe in him have hope?”

He’s seen it before, men pretending to be God. And maybe this man really was someone special—most importantly, he was kind. He tried his best to help everyone, regardless of who they were. If anyone should have been immortal, George thinks, it should have been him.

George’s relationship with religion teeters on the precipice of believing in something and believing in nothing. He likes to think that there’s a reason the universe chose him to be immortal, gave him this blessing and this curse, but in the end, he feels that the universe is at best indifferent.

At least, until he meets Sappnap. Because if the universe were indifferent, it would not have blessed him with companions like both Dream and Sappnap. If it didn’t care, it would not have given him a relationship with Dream and a relationship exactly the opposite but somehow the same with Sappnap. It’s the middle of Constantine’s rule and he hasn’t seen Dream for nearly a hundred and fifty years, and a man comes up to him out of the crowd and holds out a hand.

“Sorry,” George says, his voice thickly accented in this new language that he’s been trying to keep up with. “Do I know you?”

“Sappnap,” the man says. “Dream sent me. Said I’d find you in Rome.”

George quirks his lips up. This man has the obvious air of a young immortal; maybe it’s the way he stands, the way he holds himself, the way he jumps when people brush past them. He’s likely

recognized George because of his air of an old immortal- tired. He's seen too much. George reaches out and shakes his hand.

"I'm Error," George says. "Would you like to take a walk?"

He learns that Sapnap has been around for a hundred years and found Dream by chance, after accidentally stabbing him in the back when Dream broke into his barn. When Dream survived, Sapnap says, it was like a door being opened.

"Because I'd died a few decades before, and I had no idea what was going on," Sapnap says. "And Dream told me there were more of you. That the Angel of Death is nearly two thousand years old and the Blood God is fifteen hundred. He didn't tell me how old you were, though, just that you were the oldest."

"Because he doesn't know how old I am," George says, grinning. "And neither will you. Just know that I'm old."

More than three thousand years old, at this point. That's too long to be alive, in his opinion. But here he is.

He and Sapnap become good friends over the next seventy or so years- they annoy each other into oblivion, but George feels a sort of camaraderie with the other man. They fight well together, and they both have stories about Dream doing stupid things, and they're together when Rome falls, which is enough to bond them for the rest of time.

Dream finds them after the fall of the great empire, worried out of his mind, talking about how there's another immortal with the Angel and the Blood God and something about the burning of the Library of Alexandria actually having been the Angel's fault and by the time they've calmed him down, he hugs both of them tightly.

It catches George off guard. He can't remember the last time someone hugged him. It's a nice feeling, he decides. Sapnap, meanwhile, is laughing, patting Dream on the back and telling him to explain more slowly.

"He's called the Siren," Dream says. "Apparently he's been around for nearly a thousand years. They're all off playing pirates."

“Of course they are,” George snorts. The Angel and the Blood God would love nothing more than sailing the seas, conquering the waters. “Do you know his real name?”

“No,” Dream says. “Just that he’s a storyteller, apparently.” George takes this information with a grain of salt- if there’s another immortal out there, he doesn’t really care. It’s just someone else he’ll have to watch out for when he’s on the job.

Except he has other people to watch his back, now. Certainly, they all go off on their own, still, but George starts sharing the bases he’s been collecting for more than three thousand years. They make safehouses, storerooms, places so secret no one could even dream of finding them. They go on missions together, working on protecting the world. They go on missions separately, just to relieve stress or be alone, but they always manage to find their way back to each other.

George is just trying to get some alone time when he finds Niki. It’s been six hundred and fifty years since Christianity began, and George hears talk of a woman in a remote village being called the second Christ. They’re going to kill her, the merchant George hears the tale from tells him. “Again.”

“Again?” George asks. “What do you mean, again?”

“They’ve already killed her twice. She keeps coming back.”

George sighs.

He manages to break Niki out of prison before her fourth death, and she seems immensely grateful as they steal a horse and run away. Luckily, he speaks her language.

“They thought I was a god, or a witch,” she says that night when they make camp. “I’m just a baker.”

“There you are, then,” George says. “You’ll be called the Baker. Don’t tell people your real name. Real names have too much power for immortals.”

“Immortals?” she asks. “So that’s what I am, then?”

She seems to be picking up on it pretty quickly. George smiles at her.

“Yeah,” he confirms. “Welcome to the club.”

He doesn't have the energy for young immortals, not in his old age (the three and a half millennia mark is ticking steadily closer), so he manages to track down the Angel and his crew at a port on a nearby coastline. It takes him a good decade, during which he and Niki bond a lot, and he attempts to teach her the same things he taught Dream so long ago. When they do find the other immortals, Technoblade is the one to greet them with a drawn sword.

“Error,” the Blood God says as George approaches their ship, Niki in tow. “What do you want?” He looks prepared to fight. George waves him off.

“I've got a new crewmate for you,” he says. The Angel is approaching, now, a tall man that must be the Siren at his side. “This is the Baker. She's one of us.”

“You didn't feel like watching after her?” Phil asks, raising an eyebrow. Niki scoffs- she doesn't need looking after, and she and George both know it. These people don't but they'll learn. The Siren, meanwhile, is staring directly at George.

“Is this-” he starts, drawing forward. Technoblade holds out a hand to stop him, and he lurches back. He doesn't look like a young immortal, George thinks, so maybe Dream was right in saying that he's been around for a long time.

“Wilbur,” the Blood God growls. George makes a mental note of it. Wilbur. The Blood God realizes his mistake quickly and glares. It's not like George is planning on using the name, but if this group trusts each other enough to share their names with each other- well, that's certainly something.

After some negotiations, most of which involve Niki telling the men to get over themselves, George heads back to Dream and Sapnap. They promised to meet on the turn of the century, the year 700 AD, at the house outside the now-ruined Rome. It takes him a year or two to get back, and he gets distracted along the way, but he makes it on time for the meet-up date.

Dream isn't there. George almost isn't surprised.

Who is there, however, is a brown-haired man that has the air of a new immortal. George sighs as

he sets his bag down on the table. The man, fully engrossed in a book, jumps. He grins guiltily when he sees George and holds up the book.

“Sorry, I really love history,” he says, breaking out into a grin. George reaches up and puts the goggles- a new addition- on his forehead. “You must be Error. I’m Karl.”

“Karl,” George says slowly. “Did Sapnap tell you that for an immortal, real names have too much power to go around sharing them, Karl?”

“I know,” Karl says, nodding. “I don’t mind, much. I’m not planning on fighting anyone. I’ve only been an immortal for a year or two.”

Oh, George thinks. He’s young. He’s *really* young. He’s probably only died the once, especially if Sapnap found him right away. It’s fine, George tells himself, he just did this with Niki, the training of a brand-new immortal, and now he’s got Sapnap and Dream here to help him. Speaking of the Devil-

“Nick!” Karl calls as Sapnap enters through the back door. George raises an eyebrow at Sapnap, who flushes red.

“You told him your name?” George asks in a language he assumes Karl won’t speak. George himself didn’t even know Sapnap’s real name until now, and now- now he knows the name of every immortal except for Dream. That’s power. That’s power that he doesn’t care to have. He could rectify by telling him his name, but- no. “Seriously?”

“Look at him,” Sapnap hisses back, in the same language. “He’s adorable.”

Karl follows the conversation, confused. Sapnap gives George a pleading look, gesturing with his hands toward the new immortal. George sighs.

“Where’s Dream?” he asks, switching back to the Anglo-Saxon tongue he’s picked up, the one that Karl introduced himself in. He’s heard rumors that it’s the language of the future, the West Germanic language, and he wouldn’t be surprised.

“Don’t ask me,” Sapnap replies. “You’re the one he’s infatuated with.”

“What?” George sputters. “He’s not-”

“Please,” Sapnap snorts. “You guys are destined to be together. Just admit it.”

He leaves it at that, dragging Karl off to a different room of the house with the promise of returning once George has prepared dinner. George flips him off as he goes, and remains standing in the kitchen for a long moment, lost in thought.

Is Dream infatuated with him? Does Dream love him? More importantly, does *he* love *Dream* ? Are he and Dream destined to be together? Sure, they’ve known each other for a long, long time, but they hated each other for a while, and-

Holy shit, he thinks. He’s in love with Dream. He’s been in love with Dream for a long time, that feeling of his heart stuttering in his chest is being in love with Dream, the worry he gets when Dream misses a meet-up by a couple of days, the pounding in his head when Dream touches him, he’s *in love with Dream* -

“Sapnap!” he roars.

Sapnap comes back with a sly grin on his face. “Did you finish dinner already?” he asks.

George nearly strangles him. He probably would, if he didn’t know that Sapnap would just bounce back from it.

Luckily, when Dream does arrive, George is able to keep his cool and pretend like he isn’t hopelessly in love with the other immortal. It’s almost enough to convince himself of the fact, too, and then sometimes late at night they’ll all be piled on the floor, each reading their own book, and Dream’s leg will brush against George’s and his heart will stop beating. Or they’ll be fighting together, and his shoulder will bump against George’s back, and George will have to think fast to avoid the next swing of the opponent’s sword because he’s too busy thinking about Dream.

So it’s not *that* much of a problem. Karl slips into their group easily and chooses to be called Time, which, alright, he could’ve picked a worse name, George thinks. He could’ve picked something like *Sapnap*. They start traveling together, the four of them, working as a team rather than individuals who just so happen to meet up once every few decades.

Traveling together in their line of work, however, means George is there to see it when Dream dies, and Dream is there to see it when George does.

It's nothing out of the ordinary, really- George has seen Dream die before. Hell, George has killed Dream before, multiple times, back during their little period of hating each other. But there's something different about seeing an opponent swing a sword down on the man you love, and George cries out and Dream freezes and then he's got a blade against his neck and his body is dropping to the ground.

Sapnap, thankfully, doesn't mention that the complete and utter carnage George wreaks is out of the ordinary. It's in the early days of the four of them traveling as a group, so Karl has yet to learn that George's fighting style is more refined, minimalistic, nothing like what happens after Dream dies. Sapnap gives George a look and George, still filled with rage, shakes his head. Dream's throat heals itself roughly seven seconds after George is finished.

"Damn," he says, his voice hoarse, throat probably still filled with blood. "I missed the rest of the fight?"

"We took care of them," Sapnap says easily, still looking at George. Karl didn't lift a finger. Sapnap only finished off the person he was against. The other dozen or so soldiers on the ground were all George.

Dream doesn't need to know that.

It happens again, a few more times- Dream is cocky when he fights, and George usually calls out warnings on instinct. But Dream is horrible at listening to others when he gets in the zone, so it startles him, makes him lose his rhythm. Dream will die, George will be filled with a type of unholy rage that only comes to him when he sees Dream dead, and Sapnap and Karl will sit back and let George do the rest of the work.

When George dies, however, it's a different story. They've been playing their little game for nearly two hundred years, the traveling together, killing people they don't like, helping the oppressed. France and Germany are currently battling it out for most of Europe, and the four of them have been lying low in the Byzantine empire. They've made too many enemies over the years, their wanted posters plastered all over the continent, outlaws in the highest regard for their proclivity for killing tyrannical leaders.

There's a group of mercenaries that's been after them for a while, and they all know it. When the group finally descends upon them, they aren't prepared. It's a bloodbath- Karl and Sapnap both die,

Dream nearly does, and when George sees the sword flying toward his skull, he knows what's about to happen.

George hates dying. With a burning, seething passion. It's a feeling you can never grow used to, but the worst part is the waiting. Because he's still in his head, rattling the bars of his cage, waiting for his limbs to start working again. There's no void, no tunnel with a bright light, no heavenly figure to talk to. It's just silence and darkness, in an unresponsive and pain-filled body, while the mechanics of immortality do their work.

As deaths go, a sword stroke to the face isn't really the worst he's ever suffered. It's a quick wound, which means it's easy to heal, just skin knitting itself back together. He can feel his eye rolling back into place and then air fills his lungs and he sits up with a gasp.

"Oh, thank God," Dream breathes out, and there are hands at George's back, helping him sit up, moving his weapon from off of him. "I thought-"

"What?" George laughs. There's blood all over his face, and he attempts to wipe it off with the back of his hand. "That I'd stay dead?"

"Yeah," Dream says, nodding. He looks concerned, terrified, relieved. George glances back to see Sapnap and Karl pacing around the destruction. It looks like a hurricane tore through their house-great. Another base to abandon. "You feel okay?"

"I'm fine, Dream," George laughs, but he lets Dream help him to his feet. "Did you do all this?"

"Yes," Dream admits easily, not ashamed for a second. He turns so that George's body is pressed against his own and mumbles in his ear, "They hurt you."

"A lot of people have hurt me, Dream," George murmurs.

"Then I'll kill them too," Dream replies without missing a beat. George grins and pulls back, but Dream keeps his grip on George's waist. "Be more careful next time."

"Always will, darling," George says, and he hopes the drying blood on his face disguises his blush. Based on the look Sapnap gives him over Dream's shoulder, it doesn't.

The new millennium brings changes- so many changes. Technology starts picking up its pace, though George has a feeling the golden age is still around the corner. They die and they live and they laugh and they have so much fun, more fun than George has had in a long time, even when they see and do horrible things. They make a vow, to themselves and each other, that they're going to make the world a better place.

"So, wait," Karl says, somewhere around the twelfth century. "How old is Error, anyways?" George is surprised it's taken him this long to ask. He's still never told anyone, not his real name, not how old he is, none of it. He thinks it's because he's still afraid to get attached to people. He hasn't seen the Angel of Death and his crew for a while, but something about it stings. He's been traveling with these three for so long, but he's still so used to being alone.

Dream and Sapnap both look at him, then back to Karl.

"We don't know," Dream says eventually, slowly. "He won't tell us. But he was around to see the Pyramids of Giza."

"Holy shit," Karl says, slightly in awe. "That's... that's really fucking old."

"I know," George replies, hoping his tone conveys that he'd like it to be the end of the conversation. Karl moves on quickly.

Later that night, Sapnap and Karl have gone on a walk around the property, and Dream and George are both sitting at the kitchen table. They're playing chess, a new favorite of theirs, and before he can regret it, he says, "Somewhere around twenty-eight hundred."

"What?" Dream asks.

"Twenty-eight hundred," George repeats. "Years before Christ. Was around when I was born. I don't know the year exactly, but it was somewhere around there."

"Oh," Dream says quietly, then, "*Oh.*"

"Yeah."

“Oh my God, Error.”

“Yeah.”

They go back to their game. Dream, distracted, takes one of George’s pawns. It leaves a perfect line for his queen to checkmate. He only gloats a little bit.

They get trapped in Europe for nearly the entirety of the Black Death, which is hell to deal with. They’ve almost made it out when Sapnap comes down with the plague, and then Dream, and then George. Only Karl doesn’t catch it, but he takes care of all of them until they die and come back, and then Sapnap catches it again.

“Literally just kill me,” he says, holding out a knife. “I can’t fucking deal with this again.”

“No way,” Karl says, shaking his head.

“What,” Dream says, his voice flat. Sapnap is looking at George pleadingly. George takes the knife.

“I can’t watch,” Karl mutters, turning away from the bed Sapnap is lying in, and George brings the knife down.

Sapnap doesn’t catch the plague again. George can’t wash the blood off his hands.

He’s sitting by the river when Dream finds him. It’s been nearly a week and Dream hasn’t spoken to him since the moment he killed Sapnap, but now he sits down and pulls George’s hands out of the water. They’ve been scrubbed raw. George freezes.

“You did what he asked,” Dream says, voice low. “I’m sorry for getting so upset about it.”

“It’s alright,” George replies. “I’d have been upset too. I *am* upset, too.”

They sit there for a while longer, George’s hands tight in Dream’s grip, until Karl calls them back

inside for dinner.

George has mixed feelings about Europe. On one hand, he has experiences like the plague. On the other, there are times like the Renaissance. He *thrives* during the Renaissance- their group agrees to take a break from the killing, each going off on their own for a little while, and God does George love Florence. He paints and he sculpts and more importantly he poses for paintings and sculptures, and it's *fun*. He has *fun*. He misses Dream the whole time, and Sapnap and Karl too, a little bit, but he genuinely enjoys himself.

Of course, golden ages can't last, and eventually George finds himself back in a base in northern England. This time, Dream is the first one there, and he hugs George as tightly as he can the second George steps across the threshold.

"I missed you," Dream chokes out.

"Are you crying?" George asks, and Dream shakes his head, but when he pulls back his eyes are red. "I missed you too, you big oaf."

Sapnap and Karl arrive three days later, and they've got another man with them. They introduce him as Quackity.

"1478," is the first thing Quackity says. "I was killed at the beginning of the Spanish Inquisition. Made my way to England, got hung as a witch a couple of times, and now I'm here."

"I think Karl's in love," Sapnap hisses to George in passing. Indeed, Karl is making heart eyes at the new guy, who's talking to Dream excitedly.

"Jealous?" George mutters back.

"You wish."

It turns out Sapnap doesn't have a need to be jealous- it's around the start of the seventeenth century that the three of them announce that they've gotten together. They do it in a lot more words with a lot more stammering, and Dream and George just sort of stare at them.

“I’ve been around for nearly four and a half millennia,” George says bluntly. “You really think I’m going to judge you?”

“I have not been around quite that long,” Dream says. “But I’m also not going to judge you. Congratulations, guys.”

All it does is serve as a reminder to George of just how much he wants Dream, and just how afraid he is of something going wrong. He reminds himself that Dream isn’t going anywhere, Dream isn’t a mortal he can get attached to just for them to die, but some things are ingrained too deep in his brain from his centuries alone.

Time continues to move on. George continues to be in love with Dream. Slowly, they make their way to New England. They help fight in countless wars, they help lead the Revolution, during which they see the Angel and his crew.

They’re in the middle of a skirmish and George makes eye contact with Niki from across the field. She’s got her hair tucked under a hat and a gun in her grip, and she tugs on Wilbur’s sleeve and points toward them.

Phil is the one to call the retreat, and Dream calls one shortly after. Both sides pull back, the fighting done for the night.

“What was that?” Quackity asks. “What happened?”

Dream and George exchange a look. They’re both thinking the same thing- did they just forget to tell these three about the other immortals?

As it turns out, yes, they did, and it takes a bit of explaining and a lot of yelling before Quackity and Karl reluctantly agree to come with them to see the others. As if by some unspoken agreement, they find each other in a tavern in town, no uniforms, just George’s crew and Phil’s.

“This is them?” Quackity asks, arms crossed, and Phil actually laughs.

“You didn’t feel like dumping them on us, George?” he asks, and George can feel Niki kick him under the table. She sends George a warm smile.

“It’s a pleasure to meet the rest of you at last,” she says. “I’ve heard a lot about you, Dream.”

She’s looking right at him. Maybe it’s the mask, but George can feel Dream’s gaze burning the back of his neck. That’s irrational, he tells himself, Dream was with Phil and Techno for nearly three hundred years, there’s plenty of reason for them to have talked about him as well.

“Well, introductions are necessary, then,” Phil says, clapping his hands together. “I’m the Angel of Death. The second-oldest known immortal.”

They all look at George. George clears his throat.

“I know all of you,” he says. “But, uh- this is Quackity, Karl, and Sapnap. They’ve all been around for a while.”

“I’m Dream,” Dream offers with a sheepish grin. “It’s nice to meet you, Miss...”

“Baker,” Niki says with a giggle. “I’m called the Baker.”

“I’m the Siren,” Wilbur offers. He’s looking at George with an odd expression on his face. Techno does not offer an introduction. George doesn’t think he really needs one- even if they don’t know he’s an immortal, everyone knows of the Blood God. He’s a legend that avoids the written word, an enigma, and George doesn’t like the glare Quackity is sending him.

The groups get along surprisingly well- there’s a bit of tension at the beginning, but it quickly seeps out as drinks are passed around and the night progresses. At one point, George slips outside to have a smoke, a bad habit he’s been picking up, and Wilbur follows him out.

“Error,” Wilbur says. “You know my name.”

George gives him a look, one eyebrow raised, and doesn’t say anything.

“Technoblade called me it, the first time we met,” Wilbur clarifies. “I know you know his name, as

well.”

“I do,” George confirms.

“I was just- wondering. Phil and Techno always say that names hold too much power, that you were the one that told them that. Why?”

That takes George aback. He’s so used to his lessons about immortality not being questioned, because why should they be? He’s the one with the most experience, he’s got six hundred years on Philza, his words shouldn’t be ignored, or even questioned.

But Wilbur is still looking at him like he’s attempting to read into his soul, and George sighs.

“A long time ago,” he says slowly. “Back before Phil, and Dream, and anyone else- it was just me. For a very long time, it was just me. I’d been around for a few decades at that point, and as you probably know, had died and come back a fair few times. As we do.”

“As we do,” Wilbur echoes. He nods for George to continue. George takes a long draw from his pipe before he does.

“And when we die, it’s just- nothing. For a bit.”

“Right.”

“I’ve lost track of which death it was- must’ve been fiftieth or so- and I had been biting off more than I could chew. So when I was dead, instead of waiting for my body to recover, I left.”

“You left,” Wilbur says flatly.

“I left,” George agrees. “It was a slip-up. A mistake. The universe shouldn’t have let it happen, and it told me so. I visited the Void, where the universe lives, and I spoke to it. And it told me that I would receive no explanation for why I was here and why I was immortal, and that someday, I would find my purpose. And it wouldn’t cure my immortality, but that I needed to know that somewhere, out there, was someone that was destined for me. And there would be more immortals

that are destined for each other, and they would find each other, and that would be that.”

“And that would be that,” Wilbur says, nodding softly. “And the names?”

“I asked if there was anything else I needed to know,” George says with a shrug. “And it told me to be patient. It told me to wait. It told me that names hold power for us, that *everything* holds power for us, but our names are the only parts of our mortality that we have left. That’s why they have so much power.”

Wilbur thinks about this for a moment. They both lean against the side of the tavern, and a few people walk past. No one spares them a glance.

“I think we have more of our mortality than that,” Wilbur says.

“Do you remember your parents, Siren?” George asks, purposefully avoiding the use of Wilbur’s real name. “Can you recall their faces? What about your hometown? Do you remember its name?”

“I... no,” Wilbur admits. “I don’t.”

“But you remember what they all called you.”

“I do.”

“There you have it. The only part of our mortal life that we have left is our name. The rest- the rest has all been diffused with immortality, and there’s nothing we can do to change it. That’s why names hold power.”

They stand there for another moment. Wilbur seems to be pondering.

“You said the universe told you there were people meant to find each other,” he says eventually.

“It did,” George agrees.

“How long did it take you to realize you had found them?”

George thinks about it for a long, long moment, before he admits, “I haven’t.”

“What?”

“I haven’t allowed myself to realize it yet. But I will, someday.”

Wilbur nods. He doesn’t say another word as he heads back inside. George follows him a moment later, slipping back into a seat between Karl and Sapnap and ignoring the look Dream sends him. When they finally part ways with the other group, George half hopes they won’t see each other again, just for the look Wilbur gives him on the way out.

It’s a look that clearly says *realize it*. George makes a promise to himself, then and there, that he will. Someday, he will.

It’s not just that Wilbur makes him slightly uncomfortable. Part of him also worries that Dream will decide to go back to the Angel and the Blood God, but those fears are alleviated that night when they’re standing in the kitchen and Dream wraps his arms around George from behind and whispers in his ear, “Yeah, they’re fun, but you’re better.”

“What?” George asks, face bright red, turning around in Dream’s grip. That... doesn’t improve the situation.

“You’re practically thinking out loud,” Dream says. “I’m not going anywhere, don’t worry. I love you too much.”

That’s it. He pulls away after that, going back to whatever he was doing before, leaving George a blushing mess. Quackity approaches him with an apple in hand and says through a mouthful of fruit, “So how long have you guys been in love?”

“What?” George sputters, eerily similar to how he just started his conversation with Dream.

“You heard me,” Quackity replies, taking another bite. He’s staring at George judgmentally.

“We’re not in love,” George says quickly.

“Yeah, you are. I know soulmates when I see them. You guys are totally in love.”

And God, George is not about to have this conversation in the kitchen of a house they’ve had since Pennsylvania was founded with the guy he’s “totally in love” with just upstairs. Quackity seems to think differently, based on the way he jumps up onto the counter next to George and stares at him. George sighs.

“Alright,” George admits. “I’m a little bit in love with him.”

“Oh, I fucking knew it,” Quackity says with a grin. “How long has it been?”

“I realized it when Karl first came around, I think. The two events were unrelated. But I’ve probably been in love with him for longer.”

“So why don’t you do anything? He loves you back, you know.”

George laughs. Quackity, for once, looks serious.

“No,” George says, shaking his head. “No, no way, I just had this conversation with Wilbur-”

“Who the fuck is Wilbur?” Quackity snaps, and George groans and puts his head down on the counter. Quackity pats his back awkwardly. “Seriously, man, who-”

“The Siren,” George says quickly. “I- no. We were talking about my experiences with the universe. How it told me there was-”

“It *told* you things?” Quackity demands. “It just told me to fuck off!”

And that's a conversation they're going to have to have later, George thinks, how many of them have actually spoken to the universe. But that's an issue for tomorrow morning, not for the dead of night in their kitchen with Sapnap and Karl attempting to sleep in the other room and Dream probably pacing upstairs, waiting for George to join him.

Alright, George thinks. Maybe Dream does love him.

He voices this to Quackity, and Quackity just snorts.

"Fucking of course, he loves you," he says. "Now go get him, or something."

George does not do that. What George does do is trudge upstairs to find Dream sitting up in bed, reading a book. He sets it to the side and smiles when George enters and closes the door quietly. Most of their bases are small, one or two bedrooms, meaning Dream and George always have to share. Neither of them ever mind. Maybe that should've been a sign that they're meant to be. *Soulmates*, George thinks, and then he pushes that thought to the side.

"Thought you'd take forever," Dream says with a soft laugh. He's pulled the covers aside so George can climb in. George changes into his sleeping clothes quickly and slides into bed next to Dream, and they settle down next to each other after Dream blows out the candle.

They sit in the dark for a moment, and carefully, like they usually do, their hands slowly find each other's.

When they wake up in the morning, Dream is pressed against George's back, one arm thrown over him, holding him close. Their legs are tangled together, and George breathes in the scent of *home*.

He slides out of bed. The Revolution continues. He doesn't allow himself to realize that he's with the people he's destined to be with.

They do have a talk about their experiences with the universe- each of them has one. Just one. Most of them have received the same information as George, about names, about soulmates.

"I think we're meant to be together," Quackity says slowly. "The five of us, I mean. So. Alex. My name is Alex."

“Nick,” Sarnap offers softly.

“Karl,” Karl says easily. They look to Dream, who’s next in line, and Dream says slowly, carefully,

“Clay. Before I was Dream, I was- I was Clay.”

Clay. It’s a nice name, George thinks, but Dream is more befitting of the golden-eyed man. They look to George. George says nothing. He doesn’t think they blame him.

They stick around America for its formation. They watch the new government fail, and the politicians and war heroes try again, and this time they sort-of succeed. None of them are entirely thrilled with the way things go, but they continue what they’ve been doing. They travel around the world and they kill people they think should be killed and they watch as technology advances again and again and again.

George isn’t fond of technology, at first, just like how he isn’t fond of quickly languages change. But he adapts, and he overcomes, just like he does with every other challenge. They try out new inventions and they continue expanding their bases and they find new bases, around the world, and most importantly the five of them stay together.

They advocate for the abolition of slavery, for voting rights, for human rights in general. They’re on the side of the Union during America’s Civil War, they get arrested during protests too many times to count, and then they go back to fighting in the shadows. It would be bad if they were recognized, because of George’s little stint during the Renaissance that has made his face a bit famous. They find a painting while they’re undercover in an art museum and Dream grabs George’s arm and says, “Is this you?”

“Oh my God,” George says, because it is him in the painting, and he remembers the man who painted that painting, and that’s a whole trip down memory lane he wasn’t expecting on this fine day in 1892. But that’s him, staring back from the painted lines, and Dream is laughing and dragging the other three over and the mission is almost forgotten until the target walks right past them.

The twentieth century is certainly something, to say the least. They’re all active in World War I, trying to stay on the down-low since they technically aren’t registered citizens in any country around the world. Instead they sneak behind enemy lines and do what they do best: help from the shadows. And sometimes, at night, the five of them will huddle together and think about how

mortals are, in all honesty, fucking insane.

“They’re given one life,” Quackity, the youngest by far, mutters at one point. Karl has his arms wrapped around Quackity’s back, and Sapnap is curled up in his lap. Dream and George are across from them at their campsite, wrapped in each other’s arms, pretending it’s just to keep warm. “They’re given one life and this is what they do with it.”

“This is what they do with it,” George agrees. He’s seen a lot of war, of suffering, of pain. He likes to think he’s well-acquainted with death, but this- seeing what the mortals have been doing recently, this is something new. This is something horrible.

He knows that in beauty there is pain, and all that, and they’ll probably bounce back from this easily. But he’s sick of death. He wants to see life.

He knows they’re not ever going to stop fighting. They can’t afford it. The universe has given them this gift, this blessing and this curse, and now they must give back. So they fight between the lines, and at night they sneak off to make their camps and rest in each other’s arms and they know that one day, hopefully, things will be at peace.

It comes in the form of the roaring twenties, where everything is chaos, development happening at the speed of light. It comes in the form of illegal alcohol that feels so much more fun because it’s illegal, it comes in the form of jazz in the back corners of dingy alleyways, it comes in the form of speakeasies and taxis and cars and radios and *change*. George isn’t sure yet if it’s good change or bad change, but it’s certainly change.

The best part, by far, he thinks, are the speakeasies. There’s something about being able to be yourself, in a culture where no one will judge you because they all have their own problems. It’s nice to be able to dance with Dream out in the open instead of hidden away in one of their bases. No matter where they do it, they treat it as a joke, even if to George it isn’t. It might not be to Dream, either, but if neither of them says it, nothing will change.

The homosexual subculture is thriving, which George enjoys. There’s never really been a name for it before, at least, one that doesn’t feel like an insult, but the five of them are able to go out at night and have fun and be themselves, which is the most important part. They don’t have to hide who they are all the time, which George knows is important to the rest of them.

At least, they don’t have to hide the parts of them that mortals are capable of being, too. They still hide their immortality. And if George gets shot in a back alley in the middle of the night while they’re running away from a speakeasy that had just been busted by the police, well- Dream and

Sapnap carry him home while the hole in his chest heals itself, the cold metal of the bullet being spat out onto the cobblestone streets. George has to throw away the blood-covered shirt, which is a shame- it was one of his favorites.

“I hate it when you die,” Dream murmurs into his neck. They’re in an apartment in New York City that’s being rented under one of Sapnap’s fake aliases (they each have dozens, at this point). There are two bedrooms, so the other three are in one, all sharing a bed as they always do, and Dream and George are in the other. It’s three in the morning and George thought Dream was asleep, but the words say otherwise.

“I’m alright,” George promises, shifting in Dream’s grip so that they’re facing each other. Dream keeps his arms loosely wrapped around George’s waist. “I promise you, Dream. I’m alright.”

“Good,” Dream says, leaning in to press their foreheads together. They’re impossibly close, and it’s impossibly dark, and anything could happen. George almost finds himself leaning in, but before he can, Dream pulls back. “I’m glad.”

The joy of the twenties can’t last. The thirties bring with them a Great Depression, and the five find themselves traveling the world, attempting to help in the only way they know how: killing the bad guys. There’s not much they can do other than help where they’re needed.

It’s not enough, not to George. It’s never enough. Nothing he ever does could be enough, and he voices this to Dream one night, while they’re lying in bed, staring at the ceiling. He’s on his back, so the tears are rolling down the sides of his face, and Dream reaches out with one hand to wipe them up.

“You’ve been helping humanity for almost five thousand years, Error,” he murmurs. “You’ve done so much for them. And you’re doing your best. That’s enough. That’s always enough.”

George cries harder.

World War II is probably the worst experience of his life, and that’s saying something. He thought humanity had sunk to a low, and they kept surprising him. The camps, the atom bombs- half of him wonders if it’s even worth helping them when they’re so hellbent on destroying themselves.

He’s always surprised that good things can come out of the bad. It’s the one thing that consistently manages to surprise him. They’re in post-Blitz London, attempting to help put the city back

together, when none other than Technoblade shows up at their door with what appears to be three teenagers in tow.

The safehouse they're currently staying in is on the outskirts of the city, nearly impossible to find. Techno's probably been stalking them for a while, is George's first impression upon seeing the Blood God, and then he realizes that the three people behind him are *not* Phil, Wilbur, and Niki, but three children that George doesn't recognize.

"Hi," Techno says, and he sounds exhausted. "Can we come in?"

The kids are staring at him with a sort of untampered awe. George can't get a read on a single one of them. He yells into the house that they've got guests and the other four practically come running, staring at them.

"Are these the ones you told us about?" the shortest of the three teenagers asks. The other two are unnaturally tall. It's a bit unnerving.

"No," Techno answers. "This is the second group. Error's crew."

"It's more Dream's crew, at this point," George snorts, because that's true, Dream is the one that's been finding new jobs for them, Dream's the one that's been leading them, and George is more than content to take a back seat and let him lead. "What's going on, Techno?"

"All three of them," Techno says. "At once."

Ah. Fresh meat.

"Alright," George says, running a hand through his hair. "We barely have room in this house for five, but I suppose we can cram in nine. Introduce yourselves, then."

"Remember the code names bit," Techno says to the three of them. God, George thinks, a new generation of immortals. He's not going to know their real names, the first out of any of the immortals-

“Tommy,” one of the teenagers says immediately. Alright, so much for that, George thinks. Techno looks disappointed. “What?” the kid says. “It’s a codename. It’s not my real name.”

“Fine,” Techno says. “I guess it counts. Next.”

“Tubbo,” the shortest of the kids offers. He’s still staring at them in awe, like he can pick up on the fact that they’re old immortals. He probably can.

“Ranboo,” the last one offers quietly, by far the tallest of the bunch. By that point, Karl has finished setting up plates at the table for nine, and Quackity has started on making dinner. George beckons them further inside, where the kids immediately start talking to Dream and Sapnap, and pulls Techno off to the side.

“How’d you find them?” he asks.

“All three of them were in the same area when a bomb went off,” Techno explains. “I’d gotten separated from the others, they were all working in a field hospital, and I saw these three walk out of the wreckage of a blast that killed thirteen other men. I’ve seen all of them die since then, and they’re- they’re all like us.”

“Holy shit,” George mutters. “Three of them? At once? That’s never happened before.”

“No,” Techno agrees. “But I think it means- well. Wilbur told us what you talked to him about, back during the Revolution.”

“That it’s meant to be,” George says. “No matter the bond. Familial, friendship, romantic.”

“Right,” Techno agrees. “The three of them- they work incredibly well together. It’s kind of crazy.” He purses his lips. “Do you want their real names? I know you probably have everyone else’s. It’s your thing, I guess.”

George thinks it’s vaguely out of character for the Blood God to be offering more power, and he frowns slightly.

“No,” he says. “I don’t need their names. I think it’s time we let someone else handle all the troubles of immortality, don’t you think?”

“No,” Techno snorts. “I don’t think.”

“No, I don’t either,” George agrees. “Take good care of them. They’re going to need it.”

“What, you don’t want three eighteen-year-olds freshly turned immortal?”

“Absolutely not, I can barely handle the adults that have been doing this for hundreds of years.”

Dinner that night is an absolute fiasco- nine of them in one place was never a good idea when it was those that had been around for a while, George thinks, but replace three with the newcomers, and it’s a disaster. Tommy, Tubbo, and Ranboo take bets on who they think has been around the longest, and George isn’t surprised when they determine Dream. They do vote him second place, though, so he has that going for him.

“Alright, then,” Quackity admits. “I’m the youngest.”

“No way!” Tubbo cries. “I thought it was Karl!”

“Nope, I’m 1478,” Quackity says with a nod. “Karl is, what, 700?”

“698,” Karl says, nodding. “I’m, like, more than twice his age. Quackity’s not even five hundred yet.”

“What about you, then?” Tommy demands, pointing at Sapnap.

“Somewhere around 200,” Sapnap shrugs. “I can’t remember the exact year.”

“And you?” Ranboo asks Dream excitedly.

“1200,” Dream says with a laugh.

“No way,” Tommy snorts. “No way you’re younger than *Karl* -”

“Hey!” Karl protests.

“BC,” Dream finishes. “Somewhere around 1200 BC.”

“Oh,” Tommy says, sitting back in his chair. There are loud laughs from around the table, and the three turn to George. George tries not to smile.

“2800,” he says. “BC. Somewhere around there.”

“So that’s why Techno acts like you’re older than him,” Ranboo says quietly. “Because you are.”

“By a good thousand years, give or take a hundred,” George agrees.

“Give,” Techno says. “You’ve got eleven hundred years on me, old man.”

They send the other four on their way a few days later, going back to searching for Phil and the others. George knows they’ll all find each other eventually- it’s meant to be, and all that.

Life goes on. They go to more protests, they help more people on the side. Eventually, somewhere around the late nineties, they settle in Florida for the turn of the century.

“I feel like we should celebrate,” Sapnap says. “This is Quackity’s first new millennium, after all.”

“We can hold a party,” George snorts.

They don’t hold a party. At midnight, the world doesn’t end, and life goes on. The five of them stay up to watch on the television as the clock counts down, and they all cheer their way into the

year 2000, and George thinks God, he's been alive for nearly five thousand years. That's too many and not enough all at once.

Technology advances rapid-fire over the course of the next two decades. They get used to it, just like they get used to all other things. They learn how to use guns and modern references and go on more missions in more places to try and make the world a better place.

And eventually, eventually, it comes to the point where Dream and George are trapped in a prison, waiting for the other three to break them out, and George looks Dream dead in the eyes and says, "George."

"What?" Dream asks.

"George," he repeats. "My name is George. My name has been George for four thousand, eight hundred, and twenty years. Maybe less. Probably more. You're the only person alive who knows, and it's going to stay that way, you hear me?"

"I hear you," Dream replies, and he's beaming like George has never seen him beam before, and he lifts the mask so George can see his eyes, practically glowing golden. "Loud and clear, Georgie."

And hearing his name fall from someone else's lips- fall from *Dream's* lips- is like music to his ears. It sends a rush through him that he hasn't felt in a long time, and he knows he just gave Dream so much power over him, but he finds that he almost doesn't mind.

"It'll be nice to know what name I'll be screaming later," Dream says, jokingly, and George splutters, the moment broken.

"Was that an attempt to flirt with me?" he chokes out eventually. "Because if so, you're failing. Miserably."

"I'm sad to hear it," Dream replies, and they both laugh, and twenty minutes later Sapnap blows the door to the cell off its hinges. Something's changed, and if the others notice, they don't say anything about it.

Dream holds his hand as they walk out of the cell. George keeps holding on until they make it back to their safehouse and break apart so they can shower. It feels right. Like it's meant to be.

After that disastrous mission, they decide to take a vacation. A road trip, across continental America, going from their base in North Carolina all the way to their base in Oregon. It'll be fun, Karl tells them, and they all love Karl too much to say no.

They're at a rest stop somewhere in Nebraska when it happens. Karl and Quackity are both off stretching their legs. Sapnap is in the driver's seat, checking the GPS. George and Dream are in the middle, pressed against each other, both having just woken up. George is laying completely on top of Dream, and he revels in how right it feels. And Dream- Dream is staring at him like he hung the sun.

"What are you thinking about?" he asks, in that dialect they've been speaking since what feels like the beginning of time. It's the Ancient Greek that they both remember well, speaking it only with each other. Sapnap glances at them in the rearview mirror, amused like he always is when they play their little game.

"That time in the 50's," Dream answers in the same language. "1350's. When you thought I was going to die of the Black Death."

"And you did," George snorts. "What are you *really* thinking about?"

"That poem," Dream answers. "By Richard Siken. You know the one."

"I don't," George says. He does. Dream wouldn't shut up about it when he first found it, whispered it from the bedroom while George was brushing his teeth, in the morning while George was making them breakfast, while they were going for walks, while they were on mission. George knows. Of course he knows. "Tell me."

"'You're in the car with a beautiful boy, and he won't tell you that he loves you, but he loves you,'" Dream quotes at him. George can feel his heart stuttering, and he knows there's more, but he leaves the ellipses unspoken and says,

"'and you're trying not to tell him that you love him,'" and here he diverges, because someone else's words are not their story. "And you can't see his face but you can still feel his gaze, and you can feel the beating of his heart underneath your own skin, and you're trying not to tell him that you love him, but you love him, like nothing you've ever felt before, like the brush of lips against your own and the silver blade he holds so dear, and you love him, you love him, you-"

“Love him,” Dream finishes. They’re both out of breath, for different reasons and the same ones. George reaches up and pushes the mask off Dream’s face, revealing those golden eyes he loves so much. “George.” Hearing his name from Dream’s lips when they’re so close together is like nothing he’s ever felt before. It feels right. It feels like coming home.

“Clay,” George replies. There’s a beat, where they’re so close yet so far, and then,

“Are you done back there?” Sapnap asks, in the English they’ve painstakingly learned time and time again because language keeps changing but they never do.

“Yeah,” Dream answers, and his eyes don’t leave George’s, and their hands meet. George squeezes. Dream squeezes back. “We’re done.”

They go on a walk that night, under the stars that haven’t changed in all the years George has been alive, and they kiss under the moonlight with only those celestial beings as their witness. It’s not a desperate push and pull, though George knows there will be plenty of that to come. It’s something gentle, Dream’s hands on his hips, George’s arms wrapped around his neck, the glow of the moonlight making them look ethereal. And that’s how George feels- ethereal. Like the universe is smiling down upon them, content at last.

The first time George met Dream, he killed him and didn’t think he’d ever see him again. And now- now he knows that they cannot die, that together they are *eternal*, and that maybe, just maybe, they are destined to be together.

End Notes

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